

**Date:** September 1, 2016 **Texas Works Bulletin Number: #16-14**

**To:** Eligibility Services – Regional Directors  
Program Managers  
Eligibility Services Supervisors  
Regional Attorneys  
Hearings Officers

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**Subjects:**     **1. Revised Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)  
Income Limits and Deductions**  
                  **2. Revised Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)  
Maximum Grant Amounts and TANF Chart**

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Bulletins are sent to supervisors and other regional managers. Supervisors must share this information with all eligibility staff. Please ensure that copies are provided to staff that do not have access to e-mail. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures. Active bulletins are posted on the Texas Works Handbook (TWH) website at: <http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

## **1. Revised Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Income Limits and Deductions**

### **Background**

As part of the annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants effective October 1, 2016, the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is revising the:

- Maximum SNAP Income Limits;
- Standard Deduction (for a household size of 3 or less);
- Standard Utility Allowance (SUA);
- Basic Utility Allowance (BUA); and
- Maximum excess shelter deduction.

There are no changes to the amounts of allotments, the homeless shelter standard, the standard medical expense, or the telephone standard. Maximum SNAP Income Limits chart and deduction updates are included in this bulletin.

The SNAP allotment amounts will remain the same this year. The SNAP allotment charts are included with this bulletin because the income limits have changed.

**Maximum SNAP Income Limits — Effective October 1, 2016**

<b>Household Size</b>	<b>Gross (130%)</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>165%**</b>
<b>1</b>	1,287	990	1,634
<b>2</b>	1,736	1,335	2,203
<b>3</b>	2,184	1,680	2,772
<b>4</b>	2,633	2,025	3,342
<b>5</b>	3,081	2,370	3,911
<b>6</b>	3,530	2,715	4,480
<b>7</b>	3,980	3,061	5,051
<b>8</b>	4,430	3,408	5,623
<b>9</b>	4,881	3,755	6,195
<b>10</b>	5,332	4,102	6,767
<b>Each Additional Person</b>	+451	+347	+572

\*\*The figures in the 165% column are used to determine whether an elderly person with a disability living with others may claim separate household status even though the individual purchases or prepares food with the others. The figures in this column are also the gross income limits for categorically eligible households.

**Standard or Maximum Deduction Amounts (Effective October 1, 2016)**

- Standard Deduction:
  - If household size is three or less — \$157
  - If household size is four — \$168
  - If household size is five — \$197
  - If household size is six or more — \$226
- Standard medical expense — \$137 (minus \$35)
- Maximum Excess Shelter — \$517
- Standard Utility Allowance — \$338
- Basic Utility Allowance — \$300
- Telephone Standard — \$36
- Homeless Shelter Standard — \$143

**Automation Action in September 2016**

TIERS will apply the appropriate income limits and deductions for each benefit month, whether the benefit month is before or after the October COLA (including combined allotment situations). TIERS will run a mass update for all active SNAP eligibility determination groups (EDGs) during the weekend of Saturday, September 3rd, 2016, through Sunday, September 4th, 2016.

HHSC will send the following notice, in English and Spanish, to SNAP households receiving an increased allotment:

*Benefit amounts for many people have changed. This is due to new federal and state laws or rules. Changes go into effect October 1, 2016.*

TIERS is programmed to update benefit amounts for SNAP EDGs in ongoing status with no override designation, and will produce a combined notice for any SNAP/TANF/Medical Assistance (MA) EDGs with a benefit change.

**Note:** A TIERS exception report for EDGs not updated will be distributed for advisor action. EDGs not updated will receive an explanation of the October COLA on the next TIERS notice produced for that EDG.

**Action on EDGs Disposed After September Mass Update.\***

<b>For the benefit month of...</b>	<b>eligibility is determined in TIERS by using the...</b>
September 2016 or earlier,	previous income limits, the previous standard deduction amount, the previous maximum excess shelter deduction, and the previous BUA/SUA amounts for determining that month's benefits.
October 2016,	<p>new income limits, the new standard deduction amounts, the new maximum excess shelter deduction, and the new BUA/SUA amounts for determining that month's benefits.</p> <p>This includes households applying after September 15, 2016 who meet the combined allotment eligibility criteria.</p> <p>TIERS will also use the updated 130% federal poverty income limit (FPIL) amounts to notify a streamlined reporting household of the reporting requirement at application, recertification, or incomplete review when the action is disposed on or after October 1, 2016.*</p>

\* TIERS will automatically use the correct amounts for each month.

**Effective Date**

Changes are effective October 1, 2016.

**Handbook**

Texas Works Handbook updates are scheduled for the October 2016 revision.

**Training**

There is no additional training requirement.

**2. Revised Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Maximum Grant Amounts and TANF Chart**

**Background**

State law requires monthly Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) maximum grant amounts to be adjusted to approximately 17 percent of the federal poverty income limit (FPIL). Policy is revised to reflect the annual TANF maximum grant increase.

**Policy for Cases Processed Before September Cutoff**

Use the old TANF Budgetary Allowances chart found in TWH C-111, Income Limits, to determine the maximum grant amount for TANF eligibility determination groups (EDGs).

**TANF Maximum Grant Increase**

**TANF Maximum Grants (October 1, 2016)**

<b>Family Size</b>	<b>Non-caretaker Cases</b>	<b>Caretaker Cases Without Second Parent</b>	<b>Caretaker Cases With Second Parent</b>
1	98	120	—
2	141	248	189
3	197	286	313
4	235	344	352
5	302	382	408
6	326	439	447
7	407	477	502
8	447	542	541
9	512	582	607
10	552	647	646
11	618	687	712
12	657	752	751
13	723	792	817
14	762	857	856
15	827	896	921
For each additional member	+66	+66	+66

**Policy for EDGs Processed After September Mass Update**

<b>For the benefit month of ...</b>	<b>use ...</b>
September 2016 or earlier,	the old maximum grant amount.
October 2016 or later,	the new maximum grant amount.

**Automation Action in September 2016**

TIERS will run a mass update during the weekend of Saturday, September 3, 2016 through Sunday, September 4, 2016. The new TANF grant amounts are budgeted in TIERS for October 2016 ongoing. TIERS will convert the amount of benefits for TANF EDGs in ongoing status without an override designation and will produce a combined notice for any SNAP/TANF/Medical Assistance (MA) EDGs with a benefit change.

**Note:** A TIERS exception report for EDGs not included in the mass update will be distributed for advisor action. EDGs not updated will receive an explanation of the October cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) on the next TIERS notice produced for that EDG.

HHSC will send a notice in English and Spanish to TANF households receiving an increased allotment:

*Benefit amounts for many people have changed. This is due to new federal and state laws or rules. Changes go into effect October 1, 2016.*

### **Effective Date**

The monthly TANF grants increase effective October 1, 2016. There are no changes in the budgetary or recognizable needs amounts for these eligibility tests.

### **Handbook**

Texas Works Handbook updates are scheduled for the October 2016 revision.

### **Training**

There is no additional training requirement.